5. Adequate expertise shall be developed for prosecuting offenders and training be organized for undertaking investigations.

6. Steps shall be taken immediately for designating special courts for wildlife offences.

7. Create effective enforcement infrastructure both within protected areas and outside protected area to prevent poaching.

Implementation of these recommendations is the responsibility of State Governments. Government of India provides financial and technical assistance for infrastructure, weapons, communication equipments, vehicles and conservancy works for mitigating the short comings listed above except for placement of staff.

Receding of Gangotri Glacier

3870. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gangotri Glacier is receding at an alarming pace;

(b) the reasons found out for such significant changes in the shape and position of the Glacier; and

(c) the measures taken to ensure that the role of human interference does not have any impact on the Glacier?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) to (c) No, Sir. According to observations made by Geological Survey of India, the glacier is receding at a gradual pace and has since 1935 vacated an area of 0.57 sq. km. only. The earth has witnessed several phases of glacial and interglacial period. It is a natural phenomenon. Presently the earth is passing through an interglacial phase whereby the ice bodies throughout the world are receding and the recession of glacier is a natural phenomenon. The Government is aware of the environemental concerns and has supported conservation activities in the Gangotri region including afforestation, establishment of community toilets, removal of garbage and promotion of eco-tourism.